



# LEAH VUKMIR

## STATE Senator

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For Immediate Release

Contact: [Sen. Vukmir](#)  
(608) 266-2512

### **Vukmir Behavioral Health Bill Passes Unanimously in Committee**

(MADISON, WI) — A bipartisan bill to encourage the coordination of behavioral healthcare passed the Senate Health and Human Services Committee unanimously on Tuesday. Senate Bill 293, authored by state Sens. Leah Vukmir, R–Wauwatosa, and Janet Bewley, D–Mason, and state Reps. Mary Czaja, R–Irma, and Debra Kolste, D–Janesville, promotes integrated care by testing new Medicaid payment models to help Wisconsinites suffering from mental illness.

“Integrated care is the future of healthcare in our state and in the nation,” said Vukmir, chairman of the health committee. “This bill will lead to financial savings for the state’s Medicaid program. And, even more importantly, it will encourage care for patients early in the healthcare process, preventing them from going to the emergency room or having to stay in the hospital long-term.”

Senate Bill 293 contains two pilot programs to encourage coordination of care between health care professionals in the early stages of care for people who suffer from mental illness. The third piece of this bill includes a bed-tracker to allow hospitals to coordinate information to quickly access which hospitals have open psychiatric beds.

“Saturday marked World Mental Health Day, and people worldwide spent the day promoting behavioral and mental health — exactly what we’re doing here,” Vukmir said. “This bill demonstrates our continued commitment to promoting quality, coordinated behavioral healthcare in Wisconsin.”

Vukmir represents Milwaukee and Waukesha counties.

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